GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1755
ANSWERED ON:12.12.2003
ACHIEVEMENTS OF WTO AGREEMENTS
NANDIPAKU VENKATASWAMY;RENUKA CHOWDHURY

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) since when WTO/GATT talks have been going on and the number of rounds of talks held till today;

(b) the benefits that India has got in textile quota from US and Europe;

(c) the details of benefits achieved by India in other fields after signing WTO;

(d) whether the Government has commissioned a joint project in association with UNCTAD to study the impact of globalisation; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY(SHRI S.B. MOOKHERJEE)

(a) Since the entry into force of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) with effect from 1 January 1948 and until the establishment of the World Trade Organization (WTO) on 1 January 1995, eight (8) Rounds of Multilateral Trade Negotiations (MTN) were held. After the coming into being of WTO, five Ministerial Conferences have been held. Doha work programme was launched in the fourth Ministerial Conference.

(b) In accordance with the WTO`s Agreement on Textiles and Clothing (ATC), all WTO Member countries were required to integrate specific volumes of their textiles and clothing trade into the WTO framework. In addition, the size of quotas was expanded annually by the restraining countries that maintained the quota. These measures have led to increase in market access, to a certain extent, although most of these quotas would be removed only at the last stage of integration under the ATC on 31 December 2004. With effect from 1.1.2005, the entire textiles and clothing trade would get integrated into the multilateral framework of the WTO.

(c) WTO is a rules-based Organization that takes care of the interests of all Members. By being a WTO Member, India also avails of the Most Favoured Nation (NFN) Treatment and National Treatment for its exports to other WTO Members.

Since 1995, when India became a Member of the WTO, India`s exports have increased tremendously. Our exports have gone up from US $ 26330.60 million in 1994-95 to US $ 51702.22 million (Provisional figures) in 2002-03. India`s share in total world exports of goods and commercial services has increased from 0.61% in 1995 to 0.86 % in 2001, while that in respect of total world imports of goods and commercial services for the same period increased from 0.78% to 0.99?

(d) and (e): The Department of Commerce in collaboration with the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the UK Department for International Development (DFID) has in January 2003 launched a project, entitled `Strategies and Preparedness for Trade and Globalisation in India`. The aim of the project is two-fold, viz. to assist in understanding the development dimension of key trade issues, particularly as they related to the current WTO Agenda; and to strengthen the country`s human and institutional capacity for analysis of globalization-related issues and facilitate a policy environment that will support and sustain a more equitable process of globalization.